(b) whether anti-national elements can access and copy database of the Indian Army and other sensitive establishments; and

(c) whether Government will forthwith suspend the issue of Smart Cards, which have proved highly dangerous for the security of the country and if not, reasons for the same?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI SHRIPAKASH JAISWAL): (a) As per information given by Ministry of Defence, the smart card is issued to the customers of Canteen Stores Department (CSD) to purchase CSD items. Implementation of Army Headquarters' Quarter Master General's Branch software on Canteen Inventory Management System (CIMS) interfaced with smart card has been awarded to M/s. Smart Chip Limited. The question of data being encrypted by Pakistani/Bangladesi nationals is ruled out. Moreover, all the employees of M/s. Smart Chip who are working on this project are required to obtain security clearance from respective formations before taking up the work

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Presently there is no such proposal to surpend the issue of smart card.

Policy for travelling in Srinagar-Muzaffarabad bus

3057. SHRI SHAHID SIDDIQUI: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Pakistani Minister for Information Sheikh Rasheed was denied permission to visit Srinagar;

(b) whether earlier leaders of National Conference and other politicians were denied the permission to board the Muzaffarabad bus;

(c) whether there is a policy as to who can travel on this bus; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI SHRIPRAKASH JAISWAL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir

(c) and (d) All citizens of India and Pakistan (but not the third country nationals) can travel on this bus within the territory of the erstwhile State of J&K, including Gilgit and Baltistan. However, the receiving authority would always have the right and discretion to deny entry, and to specify which particular places are allowed in each case, to be visited.

Denial of visa to Pak Information Minister

† 3058. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Pak Minister of Information, Sheikh Rasheed Ahmad was denied entry visa by India; if so, the reasons therefor;

(b) whether it is a fact that the persons of both the countries holding diplomat passports have no need of visa for the visits between India and Pakistan; if so, the reasons for such type of behaviour with Pak Information Minister, and

(c) whether it will affect the peace and harmony process initiated between India and Pakistan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI SHRIPRAKASH JAISWAL): (a) Yes, Sir. Central Government processed the application of Pak Information Minister, Sheikh Rasheed Ahmad for 'travel permit' (not the 'entry visa') and declined to give him the same, taking into account all relevant aspects.

(b) All Indian and Pakistani nationals visiting Pakistan or India respectively require a visa, except when traveling by the Srinagar-Muzaffarabad bus service for which a 'travel permit' is required.

(c) Government intends to continue with the present process of confidence building, cooperation and dialogue in an atomosphere free from terror and violence.

Hi-Tech Surveillance System for Indian borders

3059. SHRIMATI SUKHBUNS KAUR: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.